

Washington, D.C. - This week, Congressman Kevin McCarthy sent a [letter](#) to the United States Forest Service urging the Agency to prioritize and protect robust and diverse access and recreation in the national forests as the Forest Service National Planning Rule is developed. The final Planning Rule, which is due out later next year, ought to be simple, unambiguous, and designed to ensure the American people can fully enjoy their national forests. McCarthy was joined on the [letter](#) by a bipartisan group of 40 additional Members of Congress.

Congressman McCarthy issued the following statement:

*"As someone who enjoys using public lands for recreation with my family, I know how important it is to keep our national forests and other Federal lands open and accessible for all to use. An ambiguous rule will, in the words of one of my constituents, lead to 'paralysis analysis' and only more opportunities for needless litigation. This results in creating barriers for the public, keeping them from enjoying the lands that their taxpayer dollars maintain."*

Background:

- The 22nd Congressional District encompasses parts of the Sequoia National Forest, the Los Padres National Forest, and the Angeles National Forest.
- 45.3% of California, by land mass, is owned by the Federal government. (Source: Congressional Western Caucus)
- 20% of California is covered by National Forests. (Source: Calculated from Census and Forest Service data)
- The Draft Concept documents for the Forest Service National Planning Rule can be accessed at [www.fs.usda.gov/planningrule](http://www.fs.usda.gov/planningrule);